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ABSTRACT

This unit focuses on the periods in Japanese history up to the reign of Prince Shotoku (A.D. 592-622) and his role in the transmission of Chinese culture to Japan. A special focus is made on the joint practice of Buddhism and Shinto in Japan. Each lesson's materials and format are described in detail with specific objectives noted and the procedure for conducting the lessons. The five lessons include: (1) "Transmission of Culture to Japan: Setting the Historical Context for the Study of Religion in Japan"; (2) "History and Tenets of Buddhism and Shinto"; (3) "Joint Practice of Buddhism and Shinto"; (4) "Differing Perspectives on the Sacred"; and (5) "Three Personal Profiles." A pronunciation guide is part of the six appendices to the unit, along with background essays on Buddhism, Christianity in Japan, guidelines for teaching about religion, references and a bibliography. (EH)

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RELIGION IN JAPAN

AND A LOOK AT CULTURAL TRANSMISSION

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RELIGION IN JAPAN
and a Look at Cultural Transmission

Grades 7-12

Developed by Gary Mukai and Wendy Klein
The Japan Project
Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (SPICE)

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Front Cover: An image of the Buddha comes together with a sacred Shinto bridge supported by a *torii*. The joint practice of Buddhism and Shinto in Japanese culture is a central theme of this curriculum unit.

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Introduction to the Unit

The process of cultural transmission is relevant to us all. Cultural transmission includes both the transmission of tradition from one generation to the next and the transmission of new knowledge or cultural patterns from anybody who is aware of the new knowledge or cultural patterns to anyone who is not. As teachers, we transmit aspects of culture to our students. By telling students "to cooperate with each other," we are transmitting a valued tradition in our society. By having students salute the flag, we are transmitting certain U.S. beliefs. Parents transmit culture to their children. Raising children with a particular religion or language, for example, would be an example of the transmission of culture from one generation to the next.

An excellent way to examine the process of cultural transmission is to examine one country's cultural influence on another country. The case of historical contact between China and Japan provides a myriad of examples of cultural transmission from one country to another. This unit first focuses on the periods in Japanese history up to the reign of Prince Shotoku (A.D. 592-622). We will examine Prince Shotoku's role in the transmission of Chinese culture to Japan, and a special focus will be made on the joint practice of Buddhism and Shinto in Japan. Students will consider differing perspectives on the sacred and will also have the opportunity to become acquainted with three modern day Buddhists who are actively involved in the process of cultural transmission today.

Prince Shotoku was undoubtedly one of the most influential people in Japanese history. He played a central role in the transmission of ideas, institutions, and technology from China to Japan. In particular, he was very influential in the development of Buddhism in Japan. Japanese had previously sent embassies to China, but Prince Shotoku reinstituted them on a larger scale during his reign. The California History-Social Science Framework (1988), page 65, notes that,

> With the establishment of direct relations between the Chinese and Japanese courts in A.D. 607, Japanese artists, craftspersons, scribes, interpreters, and diplomatic dignitaries made frequent visits to China. Members of Japan's upper classes studied Chinese language, literature, philosophy, art, science, and government. Buddhism was introduced and blended with Japan's traditional Shinto religion, "the way of the gods."

This unit is comprised of five lessons. Lesson 1 deals with the transmission of culture to Japan and sets the historical context for the study of religion in Japan. Because of Prince Shotoku's strong influence on the development of Buddhism in Japan, Lesson 2 provides a brief introduction to Buddhism along with an introduction to Shinto. Lesson 3 focuses on the joint practice of Buddhism and Shinto in Japan. Lesson 4 is about differing perspectives on the sacred, and Lesson 5 offers three personal profiles of Buddhists with whom students will have the opportunity to become acquainted.

Background information about Japanese history and culture is provided for the teacher.

Finally, please pay special attention to the "Guidelines for Teaching about Religion" (see Appendix D) published by the California State Department of Education when teaching this unit; try to emphasize the importance of respecting different religious beliefs and practices.

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Grade Level

Grades 7-12

Areas of Study

World History and Geography; Language Arts; Religion; Social Studies

Time

This unit can be completed within five class periods of fifty minutes each. Follow-up activities and suggested homework assignments can be used to expand this unit.

Materials

Slide projector
Screen
Slides #1-33
Chalkboard or butcher paper

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Objectives of the Unit

Knowledge

- define and give examples of cultural transmission
- learn basic features of Japanese history prior to the reign of Prince Shotoku
- examine Prince Shotoku's role in the transmission of Chinese culture to Japan
- be introduced to brief histories and the basic tenets of Buddhism and Shinto
- be introduced to the joint practice of Buddhism and Shinto in Japanese life
- be introduced to Japanese religious holidays, festivals, and rituals
- become familiar with traditional sacred images in Japan
- gain an understanding of the term "sacred" and ways in which the sacred is expressed in society
- be introduced to different perspectives on Japanese religion
- examine the ways in which a religion is spread from one culture to another
- learn that religion is passed from generation to generation by committed believers (cultural transmission)
- understand that Buddhism is practiced today in the United States and Japan
- learn that religious teachers and leaders work to convey values and beliefs to others

Attitude

- appreciate the importance and relevance of another country's historical culture
- consider Chinese influence on Japanese culture
- gain a cultural sensitivity to Japanese religion and culture
- become aware of the relevance of cultural transmission in our lives
- recognize that different cultures have different images of the sacred
- consider how religion functions in society
- realize that images of the sacred are recognized and respected by both the religious and non-religious members of society
- realize that images of the sacred are an intrinsic part of a culture and are carried along in the process of cultural transmission
- consider why some people choose to become religious teachers and become aware of the concerns that they hope to address

Skill

- analyze and interpret visual materials (slides)
- practice interviewing skills
- identify sacred symbols and images
- compare notions of the sacred in different cultures
- analyze primary sources
- share information and opinions
- practice writing skills and compose a letter
- practice working in small groups

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Lesson One: Transmission of Culture to Japan

Setting the Historical Context for the Study of Religion in Japan

Objectives of the Lesson

Knowledge

- define and give examples of cultural transmission
- learn basic features of Japanese history prior to the reign of Prince Shotoku
- examine Prince Shotoku's role in the transmission of Chinese culture to Japan

Attitude

- appreciate the importance and relevance of another country's historical culture
- consider Chinese influence on Japanese culture

Skill

- analyze and interpret visual materials (slides)

Materials

Slide projector
Screen
Slides #1-11
Handout #1A: Cultural Transmission in Ancient Asia, one per student
Handout #1B: Japanese History Retrieval Chart, one per student
Japanese History Retrieval Chart: Teacher Guide
Script for Slide Show: Lesson 1
Handout #1C: Prince Shotoku (A.D. 574-622), one per student
Chalkboard or butcher paper

Introduction

Inform students that they will be studying about "cultural transmission." Write these words on the chalkboard. Elicit from students what the term, "culture," means to them. Possible responses may include: religion, artifacts, language, holidays, art, literature, etc. A dictionary definition of "culture" may be shared with the students. Webster's Dictionary defines "culture" as "the integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thought, speech, action, and artifacts and depends upon man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations." Also elicit from students what the term, "transmission," means to them. Responses may include: movement, passage, message, etc. After students respond to the terms "culture" and "transmission" in isolation, ask students to attempt to describe what "cultural transmission" might be.

Cultural transmission includes both the transmission of tradition from one generation to the next and the transmission of new knowledge or cultural patterns from anybody who is aware of the new knowledge or cultural patterns to anyone who is not. Ask students to give examples of (1) "transmission of tradition from one generation to the next" and (2) "transmission of new knowledge or cultural patterns from anybody who is aware of the new knowledge or cultural patterns to

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anyone who is not." An example of number 1 would be a parent transmitting certain religious beliefs to a child. An example of number 2 would be a teacher transmitting certain beliefs about study habits to a student.

Tell students that an excellent way to examine the process of cultural transmission is to examine one country's influence on another country. The case of historical contacts between China and Japan provides many examples of cultural transmission. Inform students that, in Lesson 1 of this unit, the students will be studying about periods of Japanese history up to the reign of Prince Shotoku (A.D. 592-622). Slides will be used to do this. Prince Shotoku was one of the most influential people in Japanese history. Prince Shotoku played a central role in the transmission of ideas, institutions, and technology from China to Japan. In particular, he was very influential in the development of Buddhism in Japan.

Suggested Procedure

1. Prepare slides #1-11, projector and screen.

2. Distribute a copy of Handout #1A: *Cultural Transmission in Ancient Asia* to each student. Point out the land and sea routes by which culture was transmitted to Japan. Ancient routes (e.g., Silk Road) that have been studied previously by students should be discussed. Compare this map with a political map of present day Asia.

3. Distribute a copy of Handout #1B: *Japanese History Retrieval Chart* to each student. This chart should be used to help students keep track of the various Japanese historical periods discussed during the slide show. Following each slide, students should record (on Handout #1B) significant events and/or characteristics of the various periods of Japanese history discussed in the slide show. In addition, the *Japanese History Retrieval Chart: Teacher Guide* provides comparative time periods and events in world history, which may give students a better temporal sense of the period under discussion. Teachers should discuss these events in world history, and students should record these events also on Handout #1B. The California History-Social Science Framework, Grade 6, "World History and Geography: Ancient Civilizations" was used to determine the significant events/characteristics of world history listed on the timeline. World History: Perspectives on the Past, a high school textbook, was also used as a reference.

Note: The Nara Period, A.D. 710-794, is not discussed in the *Script for Slide Show: Lesson 1*, but is included on the *Japanese History Retrieval Chart for Lesson 1* to give the students a basic understanding of what happened after the Tumulus Period.

4. Write the following questions on the chalkboard, asking students to keep them in mind while viewing the slides:

   a. What are some examples of culture that were transmitted from China to Japan?
   b. What did Prince Shotoku do to influence the transmission of culture from China to Japan?

5. Show slides #1-11, using the *Script for Slide Show: Lesson 1*.

6. Refer to questions that were listed on the chalkboard.

   "What are some examples of culture that were transmitted from China to Japan?"

   Iron and bronze; wet rice cultivation; Chinese script; Confucianism; Buddhism; aspects of Chinese government

   "What did Prince Shotoku do to influence the transmission of culture from China to Japan?"

   Prince Shotoku helped to reform the Japanese government; his government reforms were heavily influenced by Chinese culture; Prince Shotoku reinstated embassies to China; he studied Confucianism and Buddhism in depth, and during his reign, Buddhism flourished along with other aspects of Chinese culture.

7. Ask, "What are the ways we defined 'cultural transmission'?"

   Cultural transmission includes both the transmission of tradition from one generation to the next and the transmission of new knowledge or cultural patterns from anybody who is aware of the new knowledge or cultural patterns to anyone who is not.

8. Specific content questions about the historical periods up to the reign of Prince Shotoku can be asked. Questions which encourage students to compare aspects of the slide presentation to other civilizations are highly recommended. For example:

   How was the Jomon Period similar to an ancient period of Native American civilization you are familiar with?

   Many ancient Native American civilizations were also hunting, fishing, and gathering civilizations, and pottery also existed.

   How are the burial mounds of the Tumulus Period similar to the pyramids of Egypt?

   The construction of both required extraordinary human effort; both are monuments to great leaders.

9. Suggested Homework and/or Follow-up Activities:
   a. Prince Shotoku had a considerable influence on the changing of Japanese society. Have students write a paragraph or essay about a person in United States history who had a considerable influence on United States society (e.g., George Washington, Thomas Edison, Harriet Tubman, Martin Luther King, Jr.). Students should include why the person they select still has an influence on United States society today. Students might also discuss how the person has an influence on their own personal lives.
   b. An article about Prince Shotoku (Handout #1C: *Prince Shotoku*) is also available. This can be used for teacher reference or can also be used by students who want to know more about Prince Shotoku. A suggested topic for a paper would be for students to compare the legends of Prince Shotoku with legends of famous people in U.S. history (e.g., George Washington).
   c. Have students write or discuss a family custom (e.g., celebration of a religious holiday, preparation of certain food, wearing of certain clothing). Students who are aware of their own families' historical roots to other countries may wish to write about the transmission of a custom from a particular country to the United States.

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CULTURAL TRANSMISSION IN ANCIENT ASIA

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JAPANESE HISTORY RETRIEVAL CHART

STONE AGE	JOMON PERIOD	YAYOI PERIOD	TUMULUS PERIOD	NARA PERIOD
ca. 200,000 B.C.	ca. 7000 B.C.	ca. 300 B.C.	ca. 300 A.D.	710 A.D. 794 A.D.
events/characteristics of this period in Japan	events/characteristics of this period in Japan	events/characteristics of this period in Japan	events/characteristics of this period in Japan	events/characteristics of this period in Japan
events/characteristics of world history	events/characteristics of world history	events/characteristics of world history	events/characteristics of world history	events/characteristics of world history

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STONE AGE	JOMON PERIOD	YAYOI PERIOD	TUMULUS PERIOD	NARA PERIOD
ca. 200,000 B.C.	ca. 7000 B.C.	ca. 300 B.C.	ca. 300 A.D.	710 A.D. 794 A.D.
events/characteristics of this period in Japan • immigration waves from north and south Asia to Japan • preceramic culture in Japan	*events/characteristics of this period in Japan* • existence of pottery • hunting, fishing, and gathering society	*events/characteristics of this period in Japan* • iron and bronze • rice • establishment of small states in different parts of Japan • awarding of gold seal upon one of the states' monarchs by the Chinese emperor	*events/characteristics of this period in Japan* • Yamato Court established a unified nation • presence of burial mounds • Japanese began to use Chinese script • Confucianism introduced • Buddhism introduced • reign of Prince Shotoku	*events/characteristics of this period in Japan* • new capital in Nara • flourishing of Buddhism • Chinese pattern of government
events/characteristics of world history • prehistoric cultures • Paleolithic people hunted and gathered • lack of written records	*events/characteristics of world history* • Egypt united under King Menes, 3100 B.C. • invention of writing, 3000 B.C. at Sumer • Bronze Age, 2800 B.C. at Sumer • completion of the Great Pyramid, 2556 B.C. in Egypt • rise of Greek civilization, 2000 B.C. • rise of Chinese civilization, 2000 B.C. • Buddhism developed in India, sixth century, B.C. • birth of Confucius, 551 B.C. in China	*events/characteristics of world history* • Han Dynasty, 206 B.C. to A.D. 220, in China • Silk Road in operation by the first century, B.C. • Julius Caesar, ruler of the Roman Empire, assassinated, 44 B.C. • birth of Jesus • spread of Buddhism to China around first to second centuries, A.D	*events/characteristics of world history* • Constantine's acceptance of Christianity, A.D. 313 • decline of the Roman Empire, A.D. 376-476 • Sui Dynasty reunites China, A.D. 581 • beginning of T'ang Dynasty in China, A.D. 618	*events/characteristics of world history* • Islamic Empire at its height, A.D. 750 • weakening of T'ang Dynasty in China, mid 700's

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Script for Slide Show: Lesson One

Note: The titles to the slides are only for teacher reference. They are not meant to be shared with the students as this will often interfere with the questioning in the slide script. Answers or possible responses to the questions raised in the script for the slide show are in *italics*.

Slide 1: Stone Implements
The history of people on the Japanese islands begins with the Stone Age. The discovery of primitive chipped stone implements made it clear that human life existed on the Japanese islands for tens of thousands of years. Scholars refer to this culture as the "preceramic culture."

Slide 2: The Jomon Period
The preceramic culture was followed by the Jomon Period. Jomon means "rope pattern." By looking at this slide, can you speculate why this period is called the Jomon Period? *(Jomon refers to the twisted rope patterns that appear on the pottery of this period.)* The Jomon Period began approximately nine thousand years ago, and is estimated to have lasted at least seven thousand years. Japan during the Jomon Period was primarily a hunting, fishing and gathering society.

Slide 3: Dogu
This is a slide of a figurine (*dogu*, in Japanese) of the Jomon Period. These figurines were in the shape of people and animals, and are believed to be representative of Japanese *kami*. The term, "god," is often used as a translation for *kami*, a difficult word to translate and define. *Kami* is an ambiguous expression that refers to the figures in early Japanese mythology as well as to natural phenomena. Human beings may also be regarded as *kami* (e.g., the Emperor until the end of World War II). *Kami* will be discussed further in Lesson 2.

Slide 4: The Yayoi Period
In the third and second centuries, B.C., Jomon pottery began to be replaced by more technically advanced pottery. What material is the object on the right made of? *(bronze)* Iron and bronze artifacts were characteristic of this period, known as the Yayoi Period. Yayoi refers to the name of the district, located in modern day Tokyo, where Yayoi artifacts were first discovered. The bronze artifact on the right is probably a bell. Other bronze and iron objects of the Yayoi Period included swords. Almost certainly, these iron and bronze artifacts were a result of the transmission of Chinese culture to Japan via Korea.

Slide 5: Rice Cultivation
Also during this period, the cultivation of this crop became widespread. What crop is this? *(rice)* This is a modern day picture of a ricefield in Japan. The origins of wet rice cultivation, too, are probably linked to China. How is the transmission of wet rice cultivation still significant to the Japanese today? *(Rice is the staple foodstuff of the Japanese diet. Many Japanese eat rice three times a day.)* Can you think of other ways rice is used in Japan? *(**rice as food:** mochi, or rice cakes; senbei, or rice crackers; dango, or rice confectionery; sake, or rice wine; **non-food uses of rice:** rice bran used for skin care; rice straw used for Japanese house floor mats; rice hulls used for fertilizer)*

With the development of agriculture, settlements began to arise as a result of joint ventures in agricultural production. These settlements led to the establishment of small states in different parts of Japan.

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Slide 6: Gold Seal
This gold seal is believed to be the award that was bestowed in A.D. 57 upon one of the states' monarchs by the Chinese emperor. This is strong evidence of the existence of exchanges between China and Japan.

Slide 7: The Tumulus Period
It seems likely that at least by the middle of the fourth century, A.D., the Yamato Court (named after a district called Yamato) had established a unified nation. Successive generations of emperors of the Yamato Court ruled the nation. By the time of the fifteenth emperor, Ojin, close relations with Korea had been established. What does this slide show? *(burial mound)* This slide shows the burial mound of Emperor Ojin's son, Nintoku. What might the enormous size of the burial mound tell us about this emperor? *(The large size is a strong indication of power and influence.)* This period, known as the Tumulus Period, is characterized by such burial mounds. Burial mounds can be seen all over the Korean peninsula, and the technology to build the Japanese burial mounds is probably from Korea.

The Yamato Court reached the height of its power during the reign of Emperor Nintoku (first half of the fifth century, A.D.). During the subsequent decline in power of the Yamato Court, several successive emperors to Emperor Nintoku began to exchange with China in an effort to strengthen the power of the Yamato Court. During this period of decline in Yamato Court power, more aspects of Chinese culture were transmitted to Japan. The Japanese began to use Chinese script to represent their own language. By the sixth century, A.D., Confucianism had been introduced to Japan, and shortly after, Buddhism was also introduced and has deeply influenced Japanese world view in art, literature, and philosophy.

Slide 8: Haniwa
Haniwa, or burial mound figures, were also buried within the burial mounds. What do you think the *haniwa* in this slide represents? *(warriors)* Other *haniwa* were shaped in the form of houses or animals. It was generally believed that when a human being died, s/he went to an afterlife in which certain goods (e.g., foods, swords) were needed.

Slide 9: Shotoku Taishi
One of the grandsons of an emperor who attempted to restore power to the Yamato Court was Shotoku Taishi, or Prince Shotoku (A.D. 574-622). He is pictured here between two people.

Slide 10: Japanese Money
What do you notice about this Japanese money which was issued until several years ago? *(Prince Shotoku is pictured on the 5,000 yen and 10,000 yen bills.)* Prince Shotoku helped to reform the government and put rules of government into effect. His reforms and rules of government were heavily influenced by Chinese culture. In one of the articles of his rules of government, A.D. 604, he states that the people should honor and respect Buddhist teaching. Prince Shotoku reinstated embassies to China. He studied Confucianism and Buddhism in depth, and during his reign, Buddhism flourished along with other aspects of Chinese culture.

As a comparative question, ask if students know who is pictured on U.S. currency.

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Slide 11: Horyuji
What kind of building do you think this is? *(Buddhist temple)* Numerous Buddhist temples were constructed under Prince Shotoku. This temple is called Horyuji, which was built around the end of the seventh century and is the oldest surviving wooden building in the world. It is built in a Chinese style transmitted to Japan with certain alterations made in Korea.

According to Japan 1990: An International Comparison, published by the Japan Institute for Social and Economic Affairs, in 1987, there were 93,396,000 Buddhist followers in Japan and there were 112,203,000 followers of Shinto. Japan's population in 1988 was 122,610,000. Many Japanese believe in both Shinto and Buddhism. This is a very important point in the study of religion in Japan.

PRINCE SHOTOKU (A.D. 574-622)

Handout #1C

Prince Shotoku, the son of Emperor Yomei, was 19 years old when he became crown prince of Japan. Emperor Yomei was the first emperor to promote Buddhism in Japan, and the Prince continued to spread Buddhist ideas on the national level. Prince Shotoku's efforts to incorporate Chinese as well as Korean elements into Japanese society are viewed as an important contribution to the development of Japanese civilization.

In 607, Prince Shotoku sent an official envoy to establish diplomatic ties with China. This was a significant time for strengthening communication with China, since political unity had recently been established in China following a long stretch of disharmony and division. The arts, sciences, and the government were all flourishing, making this one of the most creative periods in Chinese history. Prince Shotoku chose a group of scholars, priests, and officials to travel to China to study the political system, religious thought, and scientific ideas. The group returned to Japan with a vast wealth of knowledge that enabled the Japanese to reach a deeper understanding of many aspects of Chinese culture and assisted the Prince in his effort to administer governmental reforms.

The Prince viewed China as a useful model and worked to create a centralized state in Japan. He is traditionally credited with authoring the rules of government, an historical document containing seventeen articles. However, some scholars contend that it was actually written after the Prince's death and attributed to him posthumously. Even if that is the case, the document was greatly influenced by his thought and reforms. Prince Shotoku aspired to create a nation that embraced Buddhist principles, Confucian ethics, and the Shinto *kami*, recognizing the virtue of each in Japanese society. However, his particular interest in and emphasis on Buddhist ideas was evident. The second of the seventeen articles asserts that all citizens should faithfully honor the "Three Treasures," which are the Buddha, the Buddha's teachings, and the community of believers. It is said that he often gave lectures in which he discussed Buddhist texts.

While the Prince was greatly influenced by Chinese culture, Korean cultural ideas also lent a hand in helping him shape the Japanese nation. One of his most important teachers was a Korean priest who instructed him in Buddhist and Confucian thought. In addition, many of the temples that were constructed during the Prince's rule were Korean in style. In his later years, the Prince spent a great deal of time in one of these temples, called Horyuji, which was connected to his palace. Horyuji is a famous structure today and houses a statue dedicated to Prince Shotoku.

The Prince became a figure of worship in Japanese Buddhism because of the invaluable role he played in the spreading of Buddhist ideas. He is often referred to as the "father of Japanese Buddhism."

There are many legends about Prince Shotoku that have been transmitted from generation to generation. One legend declares that he could speak at birth. Another tale claims that he had the ability to predict the future. While this seems unlikely, these stories reflect his importance as a historical figure in Japan, and what is certain is that Prince Shotoku played a significant role in the transmission of Chinese culture to Japan and greatly contributed to the development of Japanese Buddhism.

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Lesson Two: History and Tenets of Buddhism and Shinto

Objectives of the Lesson

Knowledge
- be introduced to brief histories and the basic tenets of Buddhism and Shinto

Attitude
- gain a cultural sensitivity to Japanese religion and culture

Skill
- practice working in small groups

Materials

Handout #2A: Shinto, one per student
Handout #2B: Buddhism, one per student
Handout #2C: Crossword Puzzle, one per student

Notes to the Teacher

Lesson 2 of this unit focuses on Buddhism and Shinto. As mentioned on page 1 of this unit, the California History-Social Science Framework (1988), page 65, notes "Buddhism was introduced and blended with Japan's traditional Shinto religion, 'the way of the gods.'" After the transmission of Buddhism to Japan, the joint practice of Buddhism and Shinto began. In order to introduce students to this joint practice of Buddhism and Shinto, Lesson 2 introduces students briefly to some background information on both religions. See Appendix A and B for additional background information on Shinto and Buddhism. Appendix A and B are provided mainly for teacher reference but can possibly be of use to the more advanced student. In addition, Appendix C is available for the teacher interested in Christianity in Japan.

Introduction

As a review, ask the students what religion flourished in Japan during the reign of Prince Shotoku. *(Buddhism)* Inform students that after the transmission of Buddhism to Japan, the joint practice of Buddhism with Shinto began. Both religions have been transmitted from generation to generation since ancient times.

Our religious affiliations are often influenced and transmitted to us by our parents and ancestors. Remind students that many Japanese practice both Buddhism and Shinto. This concept may seem quite unusual to some of us in the United States. This concept will be explored in Lesson 3, but first we will briefly examine Shinto and Buddhism, the two major religions in Japan.

Suggested Procedure

1. Divide the students into partner pairs.

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2. Distribute Handout #2A: *Shinto*, Handout #2B: *Buddhism*, and Handout #2C: *Crossword Puzzle* to each pair of students. Students should read Handouts #2A and #2B.

3. After reading the Handouts #2A and #2B, each partner pair should answer the questions on Handout #2C. One partner should read the "Across" questions and elicit answers. Next, the other partner should read the "Down" questions and elicit answers.

4. Discuss the following questions as a class:
   - What was Gautama Siddartha searching for?
   - When Buddhism was introduced to Japan, what else was transmitted?
   - What important role does Buddhism play in modern Japan?
   - Why do people visit Shinto shrines?
   - Discuss examples of what a *matsuri* might celebrate? Do we have similar festivals/holidays in our culture?

5. Suggested Homework and/or Follow-up Activities:
   a. Have students compare Buddhism or Shinto with their own religions or another religion.
   b. For the more advanced students, have them research a paper about one aspect of Shinto or Buddhism. Topics may be derived from the questions for the crossword puzzle. For example: Write about different kinds of *kami* in the Shinto religion or about the origin of Buddhism in India.

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Shinto is considered to be an ancient religious tradition in Japan. In the eighth century, ancient stories about the creation of the earth and the beginning of humankind were recorded. One of these stories states that the first emperor of Japan was a descendent of Amaterasu, the great sun goddess. These legends are known as Shinto mythology.

The term "Shinto" came to be used after the introduction of Buddhism in order to distinguish the native Japanese beliefs from the newly imported Buddhist beliefs. However, over time, the two traditions came to share several aspects. The Shinto emphasis on ritual has influenced Buddhism. Buddhist ideas about the afterlife have affected Shinto. The Chinese philosophy of Confucianism also played a role in shaping Shinto morality. Ancestor worship, respect for one's elders and superiors, and social harmony were Confucian values that became incorporated into Shinto thought.

The word "Shinto" means "the way of the *kami*." The word *kami* is difficult to define because it refers to so many things that are regarded as sacred in Japanese culture. *Kami* are spirits with special powers. These spirits may take the form of gods. They may also be found in natural phenomena such as mountains and waterfalls. In Shinto, everything is thought to be alive; spirits can be found in rocks and trees, the sun, and the sky. In addition, it is often thought that some human beings turn into *kami* after they die.

A visit to a Shinto shrine is an encounter with the sacred. The shrine is an area dedicated to the worship of the *kami* and is usually marked by a gate called a *torii*. The *torii* separates the ordinary world of human beings from the sacred place where people pray to *kami*. Before approaching the shrine, people usually stop to wash their hands and take a sip of the shrine water to purify themselves. Purification is an important theme in Shinto thought. Cleansing one's body is an act that symbolizes the cleansing of the spirit. Shinto priests often conduct rituals to purify an area from evil spirits before a wedding ceremony or at the site of a new house or building.

People often go to shrines to pray for good luck and to seek protection against illness and misfortune. Charms that are made at the shrine are sold and are thought to have powers to help in these matters. Rituals are performed to ask *kami* for assistance in many situations ranging from cultivating crops and recovering from an illness to success in business and school.

The shrine is also a place for festivals and celebrations. Weddings, the birth of a child, and becoming an adult are just some of the occasions celebrated by visits to the local shrine. Festivals, called *matsuri*, are held at different times of the year to mark the change of seasons and honor the local *kami*. These colorful events are filled with music, dancing, parades, and special foods. The most important and most widely observed holiday of this kind is the New Year's *matsuri*.

While the local shrine is an important place for worship, it is important to note that many families have Shinto altars in their own homes. This area, which is designated for prayer to *kami*, is usually located near a Buddhist altar. In Japan, many people consider themselves to be both Shinto and Buddhist. These religions are not exclusive; both play a role in the daily lives of the Japanese.

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Buddhism, one the major world religions, began in India in the sixth century, B.C. The founder of Buddhism was called Buddha, meaning "enlightened one," and his teachings spread from India throughout Central and Southeast Asia, through China and Korea, to Japan. Today, there are Buddhists all over the world.

Buddha and his teachings

According to the Buddhist tradition, Gautama Siddartha, who was later called Buddha, was born around 563 B.C. to a family of nobility who lived in a palace in the foothills of the Himalayas. In his youth, his father provided him with everything he wanted and encouraged him to excel in his studies. However, he would not permit Gautama to leave the palace grounds. Gautama married and had a son but he was unhappy. He longed to see what was beyond the palace gates, thinking that a clue to his search for the meaning of life lay beyond the safety and luxury of the palace.

One day, at the age of 29, Gautama left the palace on four separate occasions to explore and was deeply affected by what he encountered. During his first trip outside the palace, he saw a very old man who was bent over and had trouble walking. As Gautama passed by in his carriage, the old man peered up at him, his eyes squinting from his severely wrinkled face. On the second day, Gautama observed a sick man, wailing in pain. During his third excursion, Gautama came upon the still and lifeless body of a dead man. Gautama was shocked and saddened by the sights of old age, sickness, and death. On the fourth day, he saw a wandering monk, a seeker of religious truth. This sight inspired him to make the decision to leave his family and embark upon a religious quest. He wanted to understand more about life, why human beings suffered and how one could help relieve the suffering in the world.

Gautama began his search for wisdom by practicing asceticism, a lifestyle of severe self-discipline. After six years of enduring many hardships, he realized that he had not come to a deeper understanding of life and decided to leave the group of ascetics. He went to a village called Bodh Gaya where he became awakened to a true understanding of life. The moment of his enlightenment took place while he was seated in meditation under a tree. The Buddha gave his first sermon, explaining his realization, to the group of ascetics with whom he used to practice.

Human beings have the potential to become free from suffering by practicing meditation and cultivating a lifestyle prescribed by the Buddha. The Buddha gave many lectures before his death at the age of 80. His teachings are referred to as the Dharma, and the members of the community who study the Dharma are called the Sangha. Buddhist teachings are complex, and people have spent their entire lives forming their own interpretations of the Buddha's words.

Samsara and Nirvana

The wheel is a very important symbol in Buddhism because it depicts the cycle of life and death. Buddhists believe that after we die, we are reborn into a new form. This new form could be divine, human, or animal (or some lower creature). All of our positive thoughts and actions cause good karma and may direct us to being reborn in a higher form. The consequences of our negative deeds, bad karma, may result in rebirth in a lower form. This endless cycle of rebirth, called samsara, reflects the impermanent nature of our existence.

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The goal of Buddhism is to become enlightened and reach Nirvana. Some Buddhists think of Nirvana as a type of heaven where there is no suffering; other Buddhists view Nirvana as a state of mind free from suffering. Those who vow that they will not enter Nirvana until all living beings are also able to be released from suffering are called bodhisattvas. Bodhisattvas work to relieve the suffering of others and try to make them aware of the Buddha's teachings.

Buddhism in Japan

The Buddhist tradition is composed of various schools of thought, each with a somewhat different understanding and interpretation of the Dharma. Although its roots are in India, Buddhism has travelled through many lands, and has taken on some of the cultural ideas, customs, and philosophical notions of those who have encountered it. In Japan, Buddhist deities, ideas, and rituals blended with Shinto, the religion practiced in Japan before the introduction of Buddhism.

The transmission of Buddhism brought Chinese and Korean arts, religion, and social customs to Japan. Buddhist monks are credited with introducing to Japan the Chinese writing system and calligraphy, the tea ceremony, handmade paper making, Buddhist art and temple architecture, and funerary rituals including cremation.

In modern Japan, most families belong to a local Buddhist temple although, generally, temple visits are fairly infrequent and are usually made in connection with funerals or memorial services (for the anniversary of the death of a family member). Many families keep Buddhist altars in their homes and ask a Buddhist priest to come and conduct the appropriate rituals.

Since there are many different Buddhist groups, there are a variety of practices and beliefs. A person who decides to undergo Buddhist training to become a monk or a nun, usually resides at a monastery or a temple. Some Buddhists may spend time meditating and/or chanting. Others may simply make offerings of food, flowers, or other gifts to a statue of a Buddha, in appreciation of their power and compassion.

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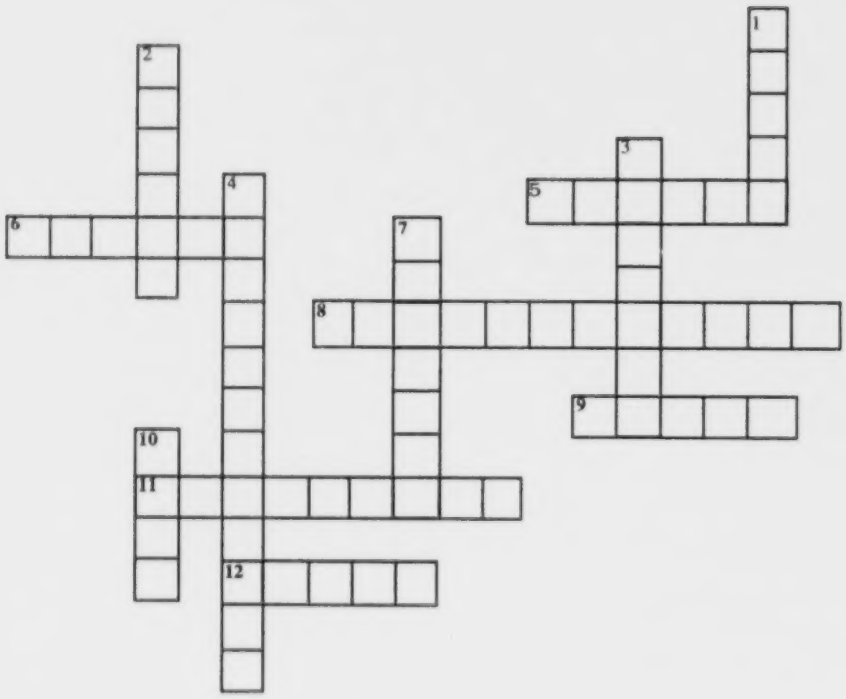

ACROSS

5. What are the Buddhist teachings called?

6. This word means "the way of the *kami*."

8. This is an important theme in Shinto thought.

9. In Buddhism, what is the law of cause and effect that will determine what we will become in our next lives?

11. According to Shinto mythology, which goddess became the ancestor of Japan's imperial family?

12. Where did Buddhism begin?

DOWN

1. Buddhist teachings were transmitted to Japan from China and _____ .

2. The area for worship in Shinto is called a _____ .

3. What is the endless cycle of rebirth called?

4. Under the influence of this Chinese philosophy, Shinto developed such moral standards as honesty, loyalty, and respect for one's elders.

7. _____ is freedom from suffering.

10. In Shinto, what are the basic forces in mountains, rivers, rocks, trees, and other natural elements called?

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Lesson Three: Joint Practice of Buddhism and Shinto

Objectives of the Lesson

Knowledge
- be introduced to the joint practice of Buddhism and Shinto in Japanese life
- be introduced to Japanese religious holidays, festivals, and rituals

Attitude
- gain a cultural sensitivity to Japanese religion and culture
- become aware of the relevance of cultural transmission in our lives

Skill
- analyze and interpret visual materials (slides)
- practice interviewing skills

Materials

Slide projector
Screen
Slides #12-21
Script for Slide Show: Lesson 3
Handout #3A: Interview Record Sheet, one per student

Notes to the Teacher

In Lesson 2, it was noted that Shinto has no sacred scriptures. Rather than through sermons or study of scriptures, it has been largely through Shinto rituals and festivals that Shinto has transmitted its practices and beliefs through the generations. By examining some of these festivals and rituals in addition to Buddhist holidays and rituals, the joint practice of Buddhism and Shinto should become apparent to students.

Introduction

Ask students to talk about a custom, religious holiday, festival and/or a religious ritual they personally celebrate or practice. Responses may include, for example, prayer before a meal, going to church on Sunday, celebration of Christmas, Hanukkah, Chinese New Year's, etc. Point out that the celebration of religious holidays and festivals and the practicing of religious rituals is a way of transmitting religious practices and beliefs from generation to generation. Point out that in the United States, a religious person typically has one faith, affiliating himself or herself with one religious organization. Often times, this religious faith has been transmitted from parent to child. As pointed out in Lesson 2, in Japan, a person may be regarded as a follower or believer of both Shinto and Buddhism. Inform students that this practice in Japan has been transmitted from generation to generation since ancient times. Note that this contrasts sharply to Western religious thinking, and, to get a better understanding of this joint practice of Buddhism and Shinto, students will be examining Japanese holidays, festivals, and rituals through slides.

Suggested Procedure

1. Prepare slides #12-21, projector, and screen.

2. Write the following questions on the chalkboard, asking students to keep them in mind while watching the slides:
   a. What are some examples of Japanese religious holidays, festivals, and/or rituals that illustrate the joint practice of Buddhism and Shinto?
   b. How does Prince Shotoku still have an influence on Japanese life today?

3. Show slides #12-21, using the *Script for Slide Show: Lesson 3.*

4. Refer to the questions that were listed on the chalkboard. Ask students, "What are some examples of Japanese religious holidays, festivals, and/or rituals which illustrate the joint practice of Buddhism and Shinto?" *(Any of the examples from the slide script can be given.)* Also, ask students, "How does Prince Shotoku still have an influence on Japanese life today?" *(As we have seen in the slides, during Prince Shotoku's reign, Buddhism flourished in Japan. Buddhism is practiced jointly with Shinto in Japanese life, and the celebration and practice of Buddhist and Shinto holidays, festivals, and rituals are an important means of the transmission of Japanese culture from generation to generation.)*

5. Homework:
   a. Have students interview either their parent(s) or grandparent(s) about a holiday (religious or non-religious) or festival for homework. Students should choose a holiday or festival that their parent(s) or grandparent(s) celebrated as children and that the students celebrate at the present. Students are to use questions on Handout #3A to help guide their interview. The purpose of this activity is to make students aware of cultural transmission in their own lives. The questions are designed to get students to think about the process of cultural transmission and about aspects of continuity and change. Continuity refers to aspects of culture that have remained the same or relatively the same over time. Change refers to aspects of culture that have changed over time.
   b. The information obtained on Handout #3A can be used as another follow-up activity and as an evaluative tool. As a follow-up activity, students can share with the class what they found out in their interviews and/or use the information on Handout #3A to write a paper about their interview. An evaluation can be made based on the quality of the paper.

6. Suggested Follow-up Activities:
   a. Make a field trip to a Buddhist temple in your area. Japanese Buddhist temples are usually listed in the telephone directory under "Buddhist Church Betsuin" or "Buddhist Temple of (city name)." Make an appointment to talk with a Buddhist minister.
   b. Attend a Buddhist holiday celebrated at a Buddhist temple in your area. Buddhist temples should be able to provide you with information on when such holidays are celebrated.

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INTERVIEW RECORD SHEET

The purpose of this Interview Record Sheet is to help you keep track of the information you get from the person you interview. Remember to select a holiday or festival that your parent or grandparent celebrated as a child and that you celebrate at the present. This interview will help you better understand the process of cultural transmission.

Interviewer's name (your name)_____

Interviewee's name (the name of the person you are interviewing)

_____

Interviewee's relationship to you (e.g., father, mother, grandmother, grandfather)

_____

1. What holiday or festival are you interviewing your interviewee about?

2. Describe three or more ways your interviewee celebrated this holiday or festival as a child (for example: wearing of certain clothing, eating of certain foods, going to church).

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d. other

3. What did your interviewee especially like about the holiday or festival?

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4. What did your interviewee dislike about the holiday or festival (if there is anything he/she disliked)?

5. The process of cultural transmission involves both continuity (aspects of culture that have remained the same or relatively the same over time) and change (aspects of culture that have changed over time). Talk about ways the holiday or festival celebration is different from the way your interviewee celebrated the holiday or festival as a child and the way you celebrate the holiday or festival. List these differences.

6. In what ways has the holiday or festival celebration stayed the same?

7. **Bonus**: Describe something else that has been transmitted to you by your grandparents and/or your parents (for example: religion, language, rituals, manners, rules). Give examples of continuity and change.

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Script for Slide Show: Lesson Three

Note: The titles to the slides are only for teacher reference. They are not meant to be shared with the students as this will often interfere with the questioning in the slide script. Answers or possible responses to the questions raised in the script for the slide show are in *italics*.

Slide #12: Shinto Altar
Many Japanese households maintain a Shinto altar. A miniature model of a Shinto shrine is placed on a shelf, and offerings of food, *sake* (rice wine), or other items are place in front of it. The red, rounded doll on this altar represents Bodhidharma, a Buddhist priest from India who went to China in the sixth century. It is said that there he sat for nine years in meditation, losing the use of his legs, but attaining enlightenment, after which he founded Zen Buddhism. The doll is considered a symbol of perseverance. It is often sold without the eyes painted in, and the purchaser paints in one eye when starting something difficult and then paints in the other eye after successfully completing it. This custom is particularly seen during election campaigns, sporting events such as baseball championships, and school entrance examinations.

Slide #13: Buddhist Altar
In addition, many Japanese households maintain a separate Buddhist altar. It usually holds a figure of the Buddha and memorial tablets with the posthumous names of deceased ancestors in the family. Flowers, offerings of food, and burning incense are regularly placed before the altar. Many Japanese pray before their household Buddhist and Shinto altars in the morning and evening as well as observe religious holidays and rites of passage (a ritual associated with a crisis or a change of status for an individual). Ask students for examples of rites of passage. *(marriage, death, becoming an adult, etc.)* The slides that follow briefly describe major Japanese religious observances. We will see the joint practice of Buddhism and Shinto.

Slide #14: Shrine visiting at the New Year
Many Japanese begin the New Year by getting dressed in their finest clothing and paying a visit to a Shinto shrine. Why do you suppose they go to a shrine? *(pray for blessing of good fortune for the New Year)* Before praying at the shrine, they stop at a small structure with faucets and a trough to wash their hands and mouths. Why do you suppose this is done? *(ritualistic cleansing)* They proceed to a larger structure with thick bell ropes hanging from the rafters. Money is tossed into a large money collection box, and after the ringing of the bells and the clapping of their hands, they say silent prayers for a prosperous New Year. Why do you suppose the people clap their hands before praying ? *(to attract the attention of the kami)*

Slide #15: In a Cemetery
The spring equinox in March and the autumn equinox in September are both designated national holidays. Explain the term, "equinox," to the students. (On these days the length of time for day and night is equal.) The period of a week around both (i.e., three days before and three days after) is called Higan. During these weeks, Buddhist temples hold services for the spirits of the dead. On the two equinox days, people visit their ancestral graves, which are often attached to a neighborhood Buddhist temple. Can you think of some items that the Japanese might bring to the graves? *(The Japanese often bring sake, special foods, flowers, candles, incense, matches, and ojuzu [prayer beads].)* Flowers are usually placed in jars or flower bins, and *sake* or foods are placed at the grave. Sometimes, water is poured over the grave markers and

graves as a purification ritual. Rubbish or weeds are removed. Candles are often lit, and each member of the family lights incense and prays while pressing his/her hands together. *Ojuzu*, which are placed around both hands, are often used in prayer. In the background, one can see a Christian church. As of the end of 1987, there were approximately 14,220 followers of Christianity in Japan.

Slide #16: Rite for the Birthday of Buddha
April 8 is the day of Hanamatsuri, or flower festival, when Buddhist temples celebrate the birth of Buddha. At the temples, a small image of Buddha is displayed before the public, and sweet tea is poured over the image as an expression of devotion.

Slide #17: Obon
July 15 or August 15 (depending on the area in Japan) is Obon, and during this holiday, the spirits of ancestors are believed to return to visit the homes of the living. Many families gather at their ancestral homes, and rituals and traditions are practiced to welcome back and comfort the spirits of ancestors. Buddhist priests often perform special services during Obon. What do you suppose the lighted objects in this slide are? *(In some parts of Japan, at the close of Obon, lanterns are set afloat, symbolizing the departure of the dead.)*

Slides #18: Gravesite
On Obon, people often visit their family gravesites to make offerings to the deceased. In this slide, a man is offering water to the deceased. The sign on the gravestone says "Kojima *ke* " or the Kojima family. The round white pieces are *dango* or rice dumplings offered as food for the deceased.

Slide #19: Seven-Five-Three Festival
On November 15, the Shichi-Go-San Festival, or Seven-Five-Three Festival, is celebrated. Traditionally, this is the celebration of the survival in good health of three year old girls, five year old boys, and seven year old girls. Parents take the children to a Shinto shrine to give thanks to the *kami* for looking after the children and ask for continued blessing and good fortune.

Slide #20: Wedding Ceremony
What kind of ceremony is this? *(wedding ceremony)* Most wedding ceremonies are conducted according to Shinto rites, as are the groundbreaking ceremonies for new buildings.

Slide #21: Buddhist Memorial Tablets
Buddhist rites are used for most funerals, and memorial services for the deceased are commemorated with Buddhist ceremonies. This is a slide of several wooden memorial tablets used by Buddhists, recording the death and posthumous names of the deceased. Images of the Buddha are also present in the slide. The hanging red objects are balloon-shaped, ground cherries, which is a species of eggplant. What other offerings to the deceased can you see in the slide?

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Lesson Four: Differing Perspectives on the Sacred

Objectives of the Lesson

Knowledge
- become familiar with traditional sacred images in Japan
- gain an understanding of the term "sacred" and ways in which the sacred is expressed in society

Attitude
- recognize that different cultures have different images of the sacred
- consider how religion functions in society
- realize that images of the sacred are recognized and respected by both the religious and non-religious members of society
- realize that images of the sacred are an intrinsic part of a culture and are carried along in the process of cultural transmission

Skill
- learn to identify sacred symbols and images
- compare notions of the sacred in different cultures

Materials

Slide projector
Screen
Slides #22-33
Script for Slide Show: Lesson 4
Handout #4A: Slide Chart, one per student
Handout #4B: Omikuji, one per student
Chalkboard or butcher paper

Notes to the Teacher

This lesson is intended to provide students with a deeper understanding of religion in Japan through examining images of the sacred in Japanese culture. Let students know that images of the sacred differ according to culture; sacred images may reveal the religious attitudes and sensibilities of the people in a given culture. It is also important to note that even people who may not consider themselves followers of a religion may recognize certain images and symbols as sacred.

Discussion of the term "sacred": When something is characterized as "sacred," it is set apart in some way from that which is not sacred. Discovering and distinguishing what is sacred involves creating or drawing that imaginary line around the sacred and separating it from what is secular or profane (that which does not have any kind of special spiritual significance). The term "sacred" is often used to denote that which is respected or worshipped because it embodies certain religious ideas, or is associated with a religious tradition. How can we recognize that which is considered

sacred to a culture other than our own? Something is sacred because it is interpreted that way. Knowledge of what is considered sacred in a particular culture is necessary to form an understanding of why certain festivals take place, why certain beliefs are held, etc. Without this knowledge, an image that is sacred to someone in a particular culture may not signify anything in particular to someone from another culture.

Introduction

A way of introducing students to thinking about images of the sacred in Japan is to first ask them about the traditional symbols or images of the sacred that permeate our own society. This lesson begins with this discussion and turns to a discussion of slides that teach students about what is considered sacred in the Shinto and Buddhist religions—many of which have been transmitted from other countries to Japan.

Suggested Procedure

1. Ask students to name traditional symbols or images of the sacred that exist in their society (e.g., the cross, God as male, heaven, hell, menorah, Bible, star of David). These should be listed on the chalkboard or on a piece of butcher paper. A suggested way to organize student responses might be by the categories of (1) Beings, Deities, Gods (e.g., Jesus, Mary) (2) Language and Behavior (e.g., prayer, Bible, confession) and (3) Places (e.g., church, holy land).

2. Inform students that they will be viewing several slides depicting images of the sacred in Japan. Distribute the Handout #4A: *Slide Chart* to each student. Students will fill out this chart while they are viewing and discussing the slides. Students may want to work in partner pairs or in small groups.

3. Show slides #22-33, using the *Script for Slide Show: Lesson 4.*

4. After the slide presentation, discuss the following questions:
   a. What kinds of things are considered sacred in Shinto thought?
   b. What is viewed as sacred in Buddhist thought?
   c. Are any of these images considered sacred in our society?
   d. Do these images differ from the ones in our society? If so, how?

5. For homework, have students create their own *omikuji*, which was discussed in the slide show. Instructions are on Handout #4B: *Omikuji*.

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Script for Slide Show: Lesson Four

Note: The titles to the slides are only for teacher reference. They are not meant to be shared with the students as this will often interfere with the questioning in the slide script. Answers or possible responses to the questions raised in the script for the slide show are in *italics*.

Slide 22: Mountains
Ancestral and agricultural *kami* are thought to reside in the mountains. The agricultural deities are believed to descend in the spring, when farmers prepare fields to cultivate rice, and return to the mountains in the fall. In rural areas, welcoming and farewell ceremonies (discussed in Lesson 3) are held for ancestors. There are many famous shrines and temples located either at the base or on top of mountains.

Slide 23: The Sea
What images come to mind when you think of the sea? The sea is thought to be an eternal world where ancestors and other *kami* reside. The divine power of the sea is an image which is often found throughout the poetry and literature of Japan.

Slide 24: The Sun
The sun goddess is an important *kami* in Japan. She ordered her grandson to descend to the Japanese islands to establish an empire, and the Japanese imperial lineage is believed to trace back to the sun goddess.

Slide 25: Torii, or Shrine Gateway
Torii (literally, bird dwelling) marks the entrance to a Shinto shrine or to a sacred place like a mountain, rock, or waterfall. Originally, it was not a gateway but served as a form of protection against evil or impure forces entering a sacred area; it is said to have originated as a perch for sacred birds within the precincts of the shrine.

Slide 26: Buddha, Daibutsu
This is a slide of the *daibutsu*, or a great image of Buddha, usually made of bronze. Colossal statues of the Buddha can also be found throughout China and countries in Central and Southeast Asia.

Slide 27: Pagoda
A pagoda is a sacred Buddhist structure which evolved from the stupa in India. Originally, stupas were built in India to designate the holy areas where the Buddha's ashes as well as other holy objects (sutras and works of art) associated with the Buddha were buried or contained. Over the centuries, the design changed as Buddhism spread through Central and Southeast Asia, and to China, Korea, and Japan.

Slide 28: Buddhist Temple
Images of Buddha can often be found in the Buddhist temple. People in the community may visit the temple to make offerings to Buddha. Buddhist priests, and monks who are in training, live at the temple while learning and teaching about Buddhism.

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Slide 29: Shinto Shrine
Shinto shrines are sacred areas. Some shrines are guarded by two stone foxes, which are thought to be messengers of the *kami*. Others are protected from evil spirits by lion-shaped guardian dogs at the front of the shrine. These guardian dogs were brought into Japan as one of the influences of Chinese culture.

Slide 30: Purification Area
What are some reasons people might be stopping at this water trough? This is a ritual of cleansing one's mind and body by the sprinkling or washing with water. After this ritual purification, one goes to the shrine or temple to pray.

Slide 31: Ojuzu
These are Buddhist prayer beads (*ojuzu*, in Japanese). Are they like anything you have seen? Buddhist prayer beads usually have 108 beads, which symbolize the 108 hindrances that prevent human beings from becoming enlighted. They are placed around both hands in prayer. Today, there are shorter prayer beads such as the one pictured in this slide. Buddhist prayer beads probably came to Japan from India via China and Korea.

Slide 32: Omikuji
This is a slide of *omikuji* tied to tree branches. *Omikuji* literally means "a divine lottery." *Omikuji* is a written oracle sold at shrines in Japan. After drawing a stick from a box containing several sticks with numbers, one is given a piece of paper (the *omikuji*) matching the number on the stick. Customarily, after reading the fortune on the *omikuji*, people tie the *omikuji* to a branch of a tree in the shrine precincts, praying either that a good fortune will come true or that a bad fortune may be driven away.

Slide 33: Ema
These wooden pieces (*ema*, in Japanese) are offered at shrines in prayer for future good luck or after prayers are answered.

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Slide	Identify one or more-Being, Place, Object	Explanation
Mountains		
Sea		
Sun		
Torii		
Buddha		
Pagoda		
Buddhist Temple		
Shinto Shrine		
Purification Area		
Ojuzu		
Omikuji		
Ema		

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OMIKUJI

Omikuji literally means "a divine lottery." Omikuji is a written oracle sold at shrines in Japan. After drawing a stick from a box containing several sticks with numbers, one is given a piece of paper (the omikuji) matching the number on the stick. Customarily, after reading the fortune on the omikuji, people tie the omikuji to a branch of a tree in the shrine precincts, praying either that a good fortune will come true or that a bad fortune may be driven away. The three omikuji on this page are copies of actual omikuji sold at a very famous shrine in Japan. Some of the English may appear awkward. On the next page, create an omikuji for homework. This omikuji will be distributed to one of your classmates as his/her fortune. Have fun.

It has cleared up, and the shadow of wild cherry blossoms falls on the ground.

Your Fortune | Excellent

God is always on your side, you're becoming long happier and happier day by day. You'll be able to realize any wish. But never be arrogant, or you'll lose everything. Be honest and faithful and take care of yourself.

- **wish** : An unexpected person will help you realize your wish.
- **expected visitor** : He(or she) will come over with a friend of his(hers).
- **missing thing** : It will be found near at hand.
- **travel** : Your destination will do you good.
- **business** : It's high time to sell or buy.
- **study** : No problem. Go on studying.
- **speculation** : Do not be venturous.
- **game and match** : You are to win, but your enemy will hate you.
- **love** : Be faithful.
- **removal** : All right.
- **childbirth** : It's easy. Take care of your baby.
- **illness** : It will not be long before you recover from it, though serious.
- **marriage proposal** : Something wonderful will happen to you. Just wait.

Thanks to the breeze, young grass has begun to put forth its shoots.

Your Fortune | Very Good

Everything will go well in time as you wish. Try to reflect yourself in the mirror of your mind, and behave yourself, or you'll have family problems. Especially don't get absorved in love.

- **wish** : It will be fulfilled.
- **expected visitor** : There will be something wrong with him(or her), so he(or she) won't come.
- **missing thing** : It's difficult to be found.
- **travel** : All right if you have a good company.
- **business** : Prices are settled.
- **study** : Do your best, and you'll pass the exam.
- **speculation** : The market will remain unchanged.
- **game and match** : You'll will if you speak little.
- **love** : Find out whether he(or she) is faithful.
- **removal** : No problem.
- **childbirth** : No problem. Take it easy.
- **illness** : It's serious. Be religious.
- **marriage proposal** : Make up your mind as soon as possible. It's apt to be broken.

Abide time with patience, just as the tide will flow after it has ebbed.

Your Fortune | Pretty Good

You are suffering from a trouble no one has noticed. Be patient and religious and abide your time, and you'll have a great fortune.

- **wish** : It isn't good to try to realize it by force. Abide your time.
- **expected visitor** : He(or she) won't come, nor write to you.
- **missing thing** : It will be found in your own house.
- **travel** : Not now.
- **business** : The prices are going down.
- **study** : Work hard, or you'll fail.
- **speculation** : Sell now. The prices are going down.
- **game and match** : Do not try now.
- **love** : love her(or him) deeply with faith.
- **removal** : All right.
- **childbirth** : No problem.
- **illness** : Be religious, and you'll recover from it.
- **marriage proposal** : It won't work. Stay away from it.

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Proverb or Poem:

Your Fortune

Circle one:
excellent
very good
pretty good
poor

General Fortune:

- wish:
- expected visitor:
- missing thing:
- travel:
- future business:
- study:
- awards:
- money:
- love:
- health:

OMIKUJI

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Lesson Five: Three Personal Profiles

Objectives of the Lesson

Knowledge

- learn that religion is passed from generation to generation by committed believers (cultural transmission)
- understand that Buddhism is practiced today in the United States and Japan
- learn that religious teachers and leaders work to convey values and beliefs to others

Attitude

- examine the ways in which a religion is spread from one culture to another and one generation to the next
- try to come to an understanding of why some people choose to become religious leaders and become aware of the concerns that they hope to address

Skill

- analyze primary sources
- share information and opinions
- practice writing skills and formulate a letter

Materials

Handout #5A: Profile Questions for Small Groups, one per group
Handout #5B: Profile of Shindo Nomura, copies for 2 small groups
Handout #5C: Profile of Reverend Susan Eko Tanaka, copies for 2 small groups
Handout #5D: Profile of Reverend Hiroshi Abiko, copies for 2 small groups

Introduction

In this lesson, students will have the opportunity to become acquainted with three Buddhists who are actively involved in the process of cultural transmission. They will also have an opportunity to write a cooperative letter to one of the three Buddhists. Begin the lesson by telling the students that the presence of Japanese Buddhism in the United States continues the process of cultural transmission of Buddhism that began in India and spread through China and Korea to Japan. Two of the three Buddhists profiled in this lesson are practicing Buddhists in the United States. The other Buddhist is a young man practicing Buddhism in Japan.

Remind the students that there are different kinds of Japanese Buddhism and that three of several existing sects of Buddhism are represented in the profiles. Also, let students know that while primary sources are valuable because of the first hand knowledge and information they provide, they don't necessarily reflect the opinions and viewpoints of all the people who are members of that particular group.

Encourage the students as much as possible to discuss the content of the profiles and to express their reactions. The profile questions should help to facilitate the discussion. Lastly, encourage the application of content from past lessons when examining the profiles.

Suggested Procedure

1. Divide students into six groups of four or five, and designate small group roles (e.g., recorder, reporter, facilitator).

2. Distribute the profiles to the six small groups (two groups each receive a copy of one of the profiles). Allow about ten minutes for students to read the profiles. The reading can be done individually or as a group, having one student read orally.

3. Pass out one copy of Handout #5A: *Profile Questions* per group. Students should use these questions to help guide their letter writing. The recorder in each group may wish to take notes on student responses to the questions.

4. Allow students to compose letters in which they ask questions to the Buddhists or share their reactions to the profiles.

5. Towards the end of the period, allow each small group to share its letters with the class.

6. Teachers are encouraged to select one of these letters (per profilee) and mail it to the following addresses. Each profilee has agreed to receive the letters from the students. Do **NOT** mail more than one letter from the class to each profilee. Limit questions to a few important ones by asking students to prioritize the questions.

   Addresses:

   Reverend Hiroshi Abiko
   c/o Palo Alto Buddhist Church
   2751 Louis Road
   Palo Alto, CA 94303

   Reverend Eko Susan Tanaka
   c/o Mandala Buddhist Center
   Rd. 1, Box 2380
   Bristol, VT 05443-8841

   Mr. Shindo Nomura
   c/o Daiganji Temple
   22-2 Wakamatsu-cho
   Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo
   JAPAN

   Note: The postage required to send a .5 ounce letter to Japan is $.50

7. As a final activity, collect the *omikuji* which the students did for Lesson 4's homework and place them into a box. Have all students randomly take one. This will be their fortune for the day.

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PROFILE QUESTIONS

Handout #5A

The following are some questions to help guide you in writing a group letter to the person whose profile you have.

1. What do you think inspired this person to become a Buddhist priest?

2. What problems in society does he/she hope to address?

3. Please describe the values and/or goals expressed.

4. Does the person wish to spread his/her religion?

5. In addition to religious ideas, what else might a religion transmit?

6. What can we learn from the presence of Japanese religion in our society?

7. Think of two key questions for the person in the profile.

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PROFILE OF SHINDO NOMURA

Handout #5B

Shindo Nomura is 19 years old and presently studying at Nichiren Shoshu Temple in Tokyo to become a Nichiren Buddhist priest. As a high school student in Shizuoka, he developed a strong interest in traveling to other countries in order to spread the Nichiren Buddhist teachings. He was very active in the English speaking club and entered an English speech contest, winning first place. The following is the text of his speech.

My Mission

My hair is cut short as you can see. But I'm not a baseball player or a judo wrestler. In fact, I'm a young priest practicing in a large Buddhist temple in Shizuoka Prefecture. I would like you to know that there are such young men like me. We come from various parts of Japan, from Hokkaido, in the north, to Okinawa, in the south. In the sixth grade, we took an exam to become priests and half of us passed it. About 150 of us live at the temple, apart from our parents.

Our daily life is very difficult. We get up at five in the morning. We clean our temple everyday. There are many rules. For example, we are not allowed to read comic books or have tape recorders but we are allowed to listen to the radio. We are only permitted to watch television on Saturdays and our meals, in general, are very poor. Our usual menu is rice and miso (soy bean paste) soup with a little side dish.

You may wonder why I decided to become a priest. Our religion has spread to over a hundred countries but the number of our temples in foreign countries is few. From now on, we must go abroad. English is used in many countries. I am learning English to spread our religion to foreign countries and I try to talk to foreigners who come to our temple. Every year our temple welcomes more than ten thousand people from all over the world.

In the future, I'd like to go to Africa. It is said that one man dies every two seconds in the world. People in Africa die of starvation every day, and most of them are children. Even if they are alive today, they may die tomorrow. When I hear of the news about Africa, I cannot say that temple life is hard at all. People in Japan seldom or never suffer from extreme poverty these days.

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Why are the conditions in Africa and Japan so different? We are all human beings on the same planet. We should try to take the situation in Africa more seriously.

There is another problem that I would like to address: the problem of war. About forty years have passed since the end of World War II. Now Japan seems peaceful. But the scars of the war still remain even today. An old lady lives near our temple. Her face was burned in an explosion during the war. She always greets us with a smile. However, she must have sad memories of the past behind her smile. I think that those who have experienced war really know the misery of war and can truly appreciate peace. Everyone must understand the importance of peace. I would like to make a contribution to the world, as a priest, through spreading the idea of peace and helping those who are suffering.

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REVEREND EKO SUSAN TANAKA

Handout #5C

Reverend Eko Susan Tanaka, who graduated from a Japanese Buddhist nunnery in 1988, is the first foreign (non-Japanese) woman to undergo the difficult training practices of becoming a Shingon Buddhist priest. She is married to Reverend Jomyo Tanaka who came to the United States about ten years ago to introduce the Shingon teachings to U.S. citizens. The Tanakas run the Mandala Buddhist Center in Vermont where they teach Shingon meditation practice.

I was raised as a Roman Catholic. I attended public school and went to catechism classes on Saturdays until I entered high school. The concepts of non-violence and control of one's own spiritual destiny through practice strongly attracted me to Buddhism. I began practicing Buddhism, as opposed to just reading about it, in 1980, when I was a university student studying in Tokyo at International Christian University. Being in Japan, I became more and more convinced that I could not understand the culture unless I truly encountered Buddhism because its influence was so great.

My studies first began at Soji-Temple, one of the two headquarters of a sect of Zen called Soto-shu, in Yokohama. I went there every Sunday to sit in meditation all day for about six months. When I returned to New York, I encountered the Shingon tradition and studied intensively for four years. I completed my training and ordination in Japan at Mt. Koya, at the Koyasan Niso Shudo-in, in March of 1988. I am currently living and working at the Mandala Buddhist Center which relocated from New York to Lincoln, Vermont. We give instruction in meditation twice weekly and will be holding summer retreats for U.S. citizens as well as Japanese students coming from Japan.

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Jomyo, my husband, teaches in Japan on a regular basis and we are planning to teach in Mexico and Europe later this year.

My role as a Buddhist priest in the U.S. is one of being a resource, available to anyone who may have interest in Buddhism. We visit public and private schools, museums, and libraries to give lectures about Japanese Buddhism and culture. In Japan the role of a priest is strictly defined. Spreading the Dharma in countries like the U.S. which are basically Judeo-Christian will require a somewhat different approach, one of considerable strength and vision because new ground is being broken. Because the study of Shingon is relatively new to citizens of the Americas and Europe, I feel a great responsibility to demonstrate that Westerners too can understand and live their lives as Buddhists. Personally, becoming a priest was a very natural outcome of my study and religious vocation. I am very happy to have completed the rigorous training that the Shingon tradition requires and will energetically continue to practice and observe my vow of benefitting all sentient beings.

I believe in gentle and quiet transmission of Buddhist teachings. I do not envision Buddhism as a politically active religion, nor do I think it is absolutely necessary to convert people. If we can touch their hearts with the teaching, help them to change little by little by giving them the tools and techniques to do so themselves, then our mission, so to speak, has been fulfilled.

I think that it is very important to raise children with spiritual values and a clear sense of morality. Of course, being Buddhist, it would naturally follow that our children would be raised as Buddhist, but ultimately I would like them to be free to follow their own spiritual path when they are able to decide for themselves.

The immediate benefits of meditation practice are a sense of calmness, clarity, and insight. One makes a solemn vow to help not only oneself, but to benefit everyone. This can be realized in many different ways and on many different levels. The most important thing is to cultivate wisdom and energy through one's own practice and share this with others. Helping others is the ultimate goal.

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PROFILE OF REVEREND HIROSHI ABIKO

Handout #5D

Hiroshi Abiko is the Reverend at the Palo Alto Buddhist Temple in Palo Alto, California. Reverend Abiko is a Japanese-American whose ministry can be traced back many centuries in Japan. He is the twenty-fifth generation to continue the tradition of spreading the Jodo Shinshu teachings, one type of Japanese Buddhism that has made its way to the United States. Reverend Abiko is very active in the community. In addition to conducting Sunday services and classes for children, he also works to help the homeless and tries to reach out to people in the community who may not be members of the Palo Alto Buddhist Temple. In this profile, he describes what led him to become a Buddhist minister and discusses both his role and the role of the Buddhist temple in society.

I was born in the United States as the second son to a Buddhist minister. At the age of five I moved to Japan with my family and attended a public school. I later returned to the U.S. when I was ten years old and resumed attending the public schools here. Since my father was a Buddhist minister, I attended Sunday school taught at his temple. My parents' everyday habits, customs, and sayings were also an excellent form of education transmitted to me. My parents were kind and understanding teachers.

High school and university life in the U.S. gave me the opportunity to discover what I wanted to do with my life. During my last few years at the university, there was a definite need for me to single-out a path to take. That path was to follow the footsteps of the Buddha and to seriously study his teachings. That decision led me to go to Japan again where I attended post-graduate school and lived at a monastery. I found that the path I had chosen was gentle, meaningful, and

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enjoyable and that the deeper I entered the path, the more truthful and real everything became.

As a Buddhist minister, I try to cultivate the understanding that there is no discrimination between society and the citizen. To continue the nurturing of 'I am found in the society and the society is found in me' is an important daily practice. Buddhist practices, when applied, prepare a person to fill the societal needs naturally with no demonstrative reactions. There are many problems in society which I hope to address: dependence on drugs; homelessness and the gap between the haves and don't haves; broken families; discrimination in race, color, creed, gender, age, and wealth; greed. I strive to spread awareness and restore ethical values. I try to remove, ease, and understand the pain and suffering of all beings and to share the teachings of Buddha as widely as possible. The temple doors are open to everyone.

In both Japan and the U.S., Jodo Shinshu temples are good religious, educational, cultural, social, and recreational centers with many activities held daily. The criteria of a temple is that it has Buddha, or an object of workshop, Dharma, or teachings to be understood and practiced, and the Sangha, or fellow beings who apply the teachings which they have studied in their everyday life. In my estimation, the members of Jodo Shinshu temples in the U.S. are very skillful in interacting with each other, creating programs and implementing them, and maintaining a Sangha.

My hope is to become an extraordinary ordinary person and to spend each precious day as meaningfully as possible. I would like my children to follow Buddhism but it is up to them to make that decision. No one really listens to another's demands and this is especially true in regard to one's children. Children learn from the daily humble deeds of their parents. I see their future in my everyday life.

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Appendix A: Shinto*

While Shinto has no sacred scriptures, as do other major religions, some of its basic tenets are found in two historical writings (compiled in the eighth century), the *Kojiki* ("Records of Ancient Matters") and the *Nihonshoki* ("Chronicles of Japan"). According to the Shinto mythologies, in the beginning deities married (as male and female) and out of this union came mountains, rivers, seas, plants, animals, human beings, and numerous other deities. The myth of the Imperial Family's divine origin is traced back to the most important deity, the Sun Goddess Amaterasu. She is enshrined in the Grand Shrine of Ise. Scattered throughout Japan are other deities worshipped in various shrines numbering nearly 80,000. Overall, Shinto is not concerned with doctrines. However, it does positively assert the basic goodness of human nature and of the world. Evil, in Shinto, is little more than a lack of beauty and harmony. Moreover, good can be reestablished by ceremonial cleansing. "Religious practice" centers on the worship of *Kami*—spirits of forces of nature, departed ancestors strong enough to help or harm in rice farming, sickness, and all other human problems, as well as heroes, emperors, and a few scholars. Furthermore, in sharp contrast to the American principle of separation of church and state, Shinto professes that religion and state are inseparable.

Shinto, being a communal "religion," stresses the cooperative efforts and celebrations of the family clan, village, and nation on holy days and public festivals instead of individual beliefs and decisions. Shinto's communal roots are thought to be traceable to the concept of *musubi* or "the power of becoming and growth that links all things together."[1] This refers first to the idea of fertility, the life-power that sustained life in Japan's traditional rice growing communities. Their life power was thought to include all the gods, all those living and dead, animals, plants, and all sorts of natural manifestations, such as waterfalls, rocks. All members of the community took part in rice-cultivation and therefore had a role to play in the life-power. The concept of *musubi* largely defined the outlook of people living in traditional agricultural communities. Their outlook gradually gave rise to a specific religious system called *Shinto* or "way of the gods." It is important to note that even if Shinto became more organized or elaborate, the people themselves remained the real carriers of the *musubi*-faith. Further, the professional priesthood functioned as a kind of "service agency" for the local community. Indeed, the people, not the priests, decided when to rest from rice-growing activities and who should assume various roles in the rituals. This pattern remained so strong that later, when Buddhism was introduced, it had to accommodate itself to these practices. Buddhism, therefore, became one of several elements contributing to the maintenance and enhancement of the community's life-power of *musubi*.

* Reprinted with permission from *Introduction to Japan: A Workbook*, 1986 Youth for Understanding. Youth For Understanding, an international organization which promotes exchange between students from different countries, has published this workbook on Japan. The workbook is designed to give Western students insight into all aspects of Japan, including cultural characteristics. Appendices A and B are excerpts from the workbook, *Introduction to Japan: A Workbook*, in which common cultural miscues are examined and possible solutions are discussed.

[1] Adapted from "Religion in Contemporary Japanese Society" by Jan Swyngedouw, *The Japan Foundation Newsletter*, January 1986, Volume XIII, Number 4, page 9.

Appendix B: Buddhism[2]*

About the middle of the sixth century, Buddhism (imported from Korea) brought about changes in people's basic "religious" beliefs. After the introduction of Buddhism, called "the way of Buddha," Shinto, previously unlabeled, came to be called "Shinto," the "way of the *kami* (gods)." After gaining imperial favor, Buddhism was spread throughout the country by the authorities. Once Buddhism took hold, Shinto remained subordinate for centuries.

Buddhism, although often identified as a "Japanese" religion, is an import from India by way of China and Korea over the course of many centuries. The religious founder was Prince Siddhartha (also known as Gautama and Sakkyamuni). He was a minor prince who was born near the present Indian-Nepalese border about five centuries before Christ and was roughly the contemporary of Confucius (the romanized version of K'ung-fu-tsu or Master Kung). He was raised in royal Indian tradition, trained as a warrior, married, and fathered a son. However, as the story goes, despite his almost "perfect" existence, he was greatly troubled by the human pain and suffering he saw all around him. As a result, he abandoned his comfortable life and sought spiritual happiness. At the age of thirty-six, after years of trial and error, he finally attained enlightenment, gaining the title "Buddha" (the "Enlightened One"). He spent the rest of his life spreading his teaching in northern India.

Buddhist tenets are based on the belief that all of life is filled with pain, anguish, and suffering caused by mankind's craving for impermanent things. Salvation, or nirvana, can only be gained when people eliminate the causes of suffering by following physical, mental, and spiritual disciplines. From a humble beginning, with a corps of lay teachers, great systems of Buddhist doctrine, philosophy, art, and multitudes of scriptures developed. Over the centuries many sects and subsects emerged.

In Japan during the Heian period (794-1185 A.D.), Buddhism[3] took on a new dimension because of two great monks, Saicho (767-822 A.D.) and Kukai (744-839 A.D.). They made pilgrimages to China and each introduced a new religious sect. Saicho imported Tendai and Kukai established Shingon. The diversity of Buddhism from its earliest times is comparable to Christian sectarianism.

In the early ninth century, Japanese Buddhism entered a new age, catering mainly to the court aristocrats and contributing to the cultural growth of the nation in general.

From the nineteenth century Shinto and Buddhism were, in effect, blended together, and many features of Buddhist beliefs and practices were assimilated into Shinto. For example, today each Buddhist temple in Japan seems to have a small Shinto shrine somewhere on its grounds, and Shinto shrines have (Buddhist) altars. Most Japanese homes include religious trappings from both religions, displaying a miniature Shinto shrine (*kamidana)* and a Buddhist altar *(butsudan).* Often Buddhist gods and Shinto *kami* seem interchangeable. There is a saying that every Japanese is born and named with Shinto ceremonies[4] , conducts himself as Confucian, and dies and is memorialized as a Buddhist. In contrast, although western Christianity also combined a diversity of elements, once they had been assimilated, Christianity became exclusive; practices of other faiths were not permitted.

The Feudal Era, also known as the Kamakura period (1185-1333), saw the downward spread of Mahayana Buddhism which had previously been restricted to the aristocracy. This occurred in an age of great political unrest and social confusion for the people, thus paving the way for Japanese Buddhism. Buddhism in Japan generally preaches salvation in Paradise for everyone, rather than the attainment of one's self-perfection alone. During this period the first major effort to reach out to the people (warriors and commoners alike) was made by Honen (1132-1212) who brought about the establishment of the Pure Land Sect. According to this branch, the clergy were permitted to

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marry. It thus brought Buddhism closer to the common people. Honen's appeals to the masses were further carried out by his disciple, Shinran. In time the Pure Land Sect became the most widely practiced branch of Buddhism in Japan. Also popular in this period was the Lotus Sect, or Nichiren (the name of its founder). Nichiren (1222-1282) also appealed to the common folk. This sect was frequently at odds with others because Nichiren was a spirited man who would not compromise his strong religious beliefs. In recent times, the teachings of Nichiren have inspired the more militant "new religions" of Japan.

The next major period in Japanese religious history was the Ashikaga or Muromachi period. The period between 1336 and 1573 is considered the "golden age of Zen Buddhism." Its influence, however, was cultural rather than religious in the strict sense. Much of what non-Japanese would readily identify as being Japanese culture can be traced to this period. Zen, more than any other Buddhist sect, has been the object of much publicity, reflecting its great intellectual and aesthetic appeal to Japanese and non-Japanese alike. There is great attraction to Zen because of its amalgamation of Indian intellectualism, Chinese utilitarian culture, and the Japanese sense of aesthetics.

Beginning in the Edo or Tokugawa period (1600-1868) seeds of a strong nationalistic movement began to take root with Japanese leaders using Confucianism to encourage the study of Japanese history and things indigenous. Scholars of the nationalistic Shinto school known as *kokugaku*, or "national learning," insisted on the superiority of Shinto thought over all imported teachings, including Buddhism. Thus the vitality of Buddhism was largely lost along with the decline of the social and political power of Buddhist monasteries and temples, and of the religion's cultural influence in general amidst the peace and comparative material security gained under the Shogunate's strong governmental control.

Thus, by the Meiji period (1868-1912), the government was ready to issue an edict delineating Shinto from Buddhism. From that time to the end of World War II, Shinto was a de facto state religion with the shrines receiving government subsidies. Immediately after World War II, under the US occupation, "State Shinto" was dismantled and Shinto shrines lost their government support. As a result, in the postwar period, many small shrines or less popular shrines (without much private support) were unable to continue their operations and were forced to close.

Since the conclusion of World War II, "new religions" have gained momentum. Some are based on Shinto while others are related to certain sects of Buddhism. Still others are of mixed religious orientation. Many have a variety of social and cultural activities within their own closely-knit religious circles. Some also engaged in political activities.

Today, under the present Japanese Constitution, Shinto has no official status of any kind. Nevertheless, it continues to play ceremonial and symbolic roles in many aspects of Japanese life. The majority of the Shinto shrines are organized under the Jinja Honcho (Association of Shinto Shrines), with the Grand Shrine of Ise at the top of the hierarchy.

* Reprinted with permission from *Introduction to Japan: A Workbook*, 1986 Youth for Understanding

[2] Adapted from *In Search of Mutual Understanding—A Classroom Approach to Japan*, Social Studies Development Center and the Center for Teaching International Relations, Bloomington, Indiana, 1985.

[3] Buddhism has continued to spread and, while most Buddhists are to be found in Asia, a small number are scattered throughout the world with a significant number being in the United States, mainly of Japanese descent, in Hawaii. Further, Buddhism in the West has assimilated Western church practices more so than in Japan, such as scheduling weekly (usually Sunday) worship services, Sunday school classes, and adult and youth programs, activities, and organizations.

[4] Joyous Shinto rites also include marriages.

Appendix C: Christianity in Japan

Christianity entered Japan in 1549 when a small group of Jesuit missionaries, lead by Francis Xavier, arrived to spread Roman Catholicism. The Japanese displayed an interest in the foreigners for many reasons. Japan was just emerging from a long period of political instability and some of the Japanese welcomed new spiritual ideas from the west along with scientific and cultural knowledge. With the presence of the missionaries came opportunities for foreign trade, and thus a number of feudal lords chose to support them. The firearms that the foreigners had in their possession were also of great interest to them in this age of civil strife. The number of Christians grew rapidly partly due to the fact that if a feudal lord converted to Christianity, his village often followed suit. These early Christian groups brought a new message of salvation to Japan and resembled the type of cloistered religious circles which formed in the medieval period, a time of similar social and political decline. The success of the missionaries is also attributed to their efforts to assimilate their customs to suit Japanese culture and their usage of Buddhist and Shinto terms to elucidate Christian concepts.

Shortly after its introduction to Japan, Christianity and its influence was greatly hindered by the opposing efforts of the new rulers who were trying to unify the country under their authoritative leadership. The new government was wary of Christianity because, in their view, it involved allegiance to a foreign deity which precluded a true loyalty to the Japanese nation and its leaders. In 1587, the military dictator, Hideyoshi, adopted an anti-Christian policy which stemmed from his conviction that Christianity was a subversive force in Japanese society. He issued an edict which ordered the missionaries to leave Japan and did not allow anyone to enter the country who wished to spread foreign dogma. However, this edict was not strictly enforced until a decade later and the missionaries continue to proselytize. During this time, Christianity suffered a major setback when an incident occurred which brought the government's suspicions about the danger of Christianity to the surface. A Spanish soldier claimed that it was the policy of the Spanish Empire to dispatch military forces to foreign lands after sending the missionaries. The government took this as a direct threat of colonization and, in 1597, attempted to enforce the edict issued ten years before and ordered the crucifixion of six missionaries and twenty Japanese Christians who were aiding them in Nagasaki. When Hideyoshi died in 1598, the persecution temporarily subsided.

In 1600, Tokugawa Ieyasu became shogun and was more conciliatory in his approach to the Christian missionaries in the beginning of his rule. He allowed the missionaries to remain in Japan in an effort to maintain trade relations with Spain and Portugal. However, his attitude soon changed and in 1614 he commanded his successor to issue an edict banning Christianity, deporting the missionaries and ordering all Christians to renounce their faith or face exile or torture. The most brutal period of persecution followed under the rule of the third shogun, Iemitsu, who began measures to essentially close off Japan to the rest of the world. His edict prevented Japanese to go abroad without authorization and stated that those who had left the country faced certain death upon returning. No foreign ships were permitted to enter Japanese ports and all trade ties were severed. With Japan in seclusion and persecutions ongoing, Christianity in Japan virtually disappeared. At this time, Buddhism was officially adopted as a state institution and all households were ordered to register at a local temple. However, there were some Japanese Christians who, although officially classified as Buddhists, chose to conceal their faith and practice their religion in private.

It was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that Japan opened its ports again by signing a treaty with the United States. These negotiations eventually lead to foreign trade and the influx of technical, political, and cultural ideas from the west allowing Christianity to resurface. In

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1865, when Catholic missionaries arrived in Nagasaki to establish a church, they discovered that there were still some Christians present whose ancestors had secretly transmitted their beliefs over the past two centuries. The number of Christians began to grow as Protestant missionaries entered Japan and new denominations appeared.

In 1868, the feudal autocracy fell and was replaced by the Meiji leaders who attempted to establish a more democratic regime free of corruption. The missionaries found new converts among those who were attracted to Christian egalitarian values, strict sense of morality, and message of salvation. In 1873, the ban on Christianity that had been issued in the Tokugawa period was officially lifted. During this period, Christian schools were established and Christians were active in social work and politics. However, Christianity was considered by many to be a foreign religion. This factor made it appealing to some Japanese while others branded it as being unpatriotic. The unifying symbol for the nation was Emperor Meiji whose divine stature was to be respected and upheld. The Meiji government advocated religious freedom but made it clear that loyalty to the nation superceded devotion to a foreign deity. There was also some resentment directed at the west during this time regarding the unequal treaty system established by the U.S. which enabled western nations to have trading privileges over the Japanese. During the Sino-Japanese War (1894-5) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5), nationalistic sentiments grew and the issue of loyalty continued to be an important point of contention in regard to Christianity.

Another reason that the conversion rate to Christianity was lower in modern Japan than in the earlier period was that villages were no longer converting en masse as they did in feudal times. Religion in Japan was, and still is, a communal or familial activity which centered around the local shrines and temples and involved devotion to many deities. Therefore, the concepts of individual faith and the worship of a single deity were quite alien in character.

After the turn of the century, the Japanese government gradually came under the influence of the military who promoted ultranationalist views and Christians were often made the objects of attack and bitter criticism. During World War II, Christian churches were forced to propagate nationalistic ideology and those who refused to comply were imprisoned. It was not until after the war ended and a new constitution was promulgated in 1946 that freedom of religion became an indisputable right of the people, enabling Christianity to exist without any governmental interference.

After the war, missionaries from different countries entered Japan and new denominations began to appear. Many forms of Christianity can be found in Japan today, ranging from the Christian Scientists to the Mormons to the Russian Orthodox Christians. There are also some new Christian religions which have combined some Buddhist, Shinto, and folk elements. Ancestor worship, an important practice in Japanese religion, has been incorporated into the teachings of some Christian churches. Still, the debate continues as to whether or not an accurate and deep understanding of Christianity truly exists in Japan. Some argue that its western origins, denominational differences, emphasis on individual faith, monotheism, and strict code of ethics are problematic points which hinder it from being unconditionally accepted into Japanese society. However, Christians continue to be active in the educational and social service spheres and Christianity is recognized as one of the major religious institutions in Japan today, even though slightly less than one percent of the population are Christian church members.

Appendix D: Guidelines for Teaching about Religion*

Religion should be discussed with sensitivity. Conflicting points of view are to be expected and considered; open discussion is a proper method for truth searching in the study about religion; religious indoctrination is to be avoided.

a. **Need for factual accuracy.** The need for factual accuracy is paramount in teaching about religion. Careful and balanced examination of sources is requisite for informed judgment. As much as possible, teachers should use primary sources and should encourage students to use them. Secondary sources are useful for overview and clarification. Students should be helped to identify, compare, assess, and communicate ideas and viewpoint. Teachers should be thorough in studying the sources and related materials; they should also recognize and admit their limited knowledge or understanding in a specific area.

b. **Need for empathy.** Teachers should also seek to understand the points of view of different religions. They should empathize sufficiently with the view of an adherent to a particular religion to grasp the significance of that view for the one who holds it. This empathy helps one to understand why the view is held and why it is valuable in the life of the one who holds it. One must first seek to come to an understanding of a religion within its own historical context rather than solely from one's own viewpoint.

c. **Problem of oversimplification.** In teaching about religion one must avoid the tendency to convey a false impression of the subject by oversimplifying it. Teachers should explain the extent to which a particular religion or religious view is to be considered in class. Students should be made fully aware of the limitations imposed on their study about and, consequently, their understanding of religion. Further, the diversity within religions as well as among religions should receive careful attention. In addition, the teacher should state why certain sources, selections, historical periods, themes, and issues have been selected for study.

d. **Need for sensitivity.** In teaching about religion, the teacher should be sensitive to the diverse views, levels of sophistication, and critical ability of students, parents, and members of the community. School administrators and teachers should be sensitive to the possible problems involved, such as misunderstandings and misconceptions.

e. **Avoidance of ridicule and prejudice.** Ridicule and prejudiced statements must be avoided in the study of religion and religious practices whether from a historical or contemporary viewpoint. Ridicule is rooted in an antieducational attitude; it is the product of failing to be sensitive or empathic. It results from a callous disregard for the views of another person or group.

* California State Department of Education. Moral and Civic Education and Teaching About Religion. Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1988, pages 43-44.

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Appendix F: Japanese Pronunciation Guide

In pronouncing Japanese, each syllable receives approximately equal stress and time. There are five vowel sounds in the Japanese language:

a	sounds approximately like "ah"	as in "father"
i	sounds approximately like "ee"	as in "pizza"
u	sounds approximately like "oo"	as in "flu"
e	sounds approximately like "eh"	as in "pet"
o	sounds approximately like "oh"	as in "hope"

The consonants in the Japanese language have the following approximate pronunciations:

b	as in *b*all		
ch	as in *ch*air		
d	as in *d*uck		
f	between *f*ood and *h*ood		
g	as in *g*oat		
h	as in *h*am		
j	as in *j*am		
k	as in *k*ite		
m	as in *m*itten		
n	as in *n*est		
p	as in *p*ig	t	as in *t*urtle
r	between *r*ain and *l*ain	w	as in *w*agon
s	as in *s*un	y	as in *y*ellow
sh	as in *sh*ip	z	as in *z*ebra

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